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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

POLICE WARN OF VEHICLE BREAK-INS

WAKE FOREST, NC – May 18, 2010 – Over the past several days, the Wake Forest Police Department has received over 40 reports of larceny from unlocked motor vehicles in various areas around town, including the Mill Village and along South Main Street.

To help prevent these types of crimes, the Town of Wake Forest Police Department is again urging residents to lock their unoccupied vehicles at all times. Citizens are also reminded not to leave valuables or cash in the car. If you must leave items in the car, lock them in the trunk. If you have folding rear seats, make sure those are also locked.

Police officials say most vehicle break-ins are carried out by amateurs who take advantage of the carelessness of drivers who leave their vehicles unlocked and valuables in plain sight. By simply locking your doors, you can significantly reduce your chances of becoming a victim.

The police department also offers the following tips to help prevent vehicle break-ins:

- Park in open, well-lighted, and populated areas near your destination. Avoid parking near trucks, vans, dumpsters, and other objects that obstruct visibility and provide hiding places.
- Avoid parking near strangers loitering or sitting in vehicles.
- Park in lots or garages where you don't have to leave your keys.
- If you have a garage – use it! Then lock the vehicle and the garage.
- If possible, don't leave your vehicle on the street, in an alley, or on your driveway. If you have to park on a street, avoid dark or isolated areas.
- Turn off your engine, roll up all windows, lock all doors, and take your keys with you even if you are making a quick stop at a store or gas station, or even in your driveway.
- Don't leave spare keys inside your vehicle. An experienced thief knows all the hiding places. Store spare keys in your wallet.
- Don't leave cell phones, wallets, purses, or anything of value in vehicles. If you prefer not to take such items with you, lock them in your trunk!
- Don't leave your vehicle in an unattended public lot for an extended period of time.

- Install an alarm system that will sound when someone attempts to break in, move, tilt, or start your vehicle. Always activate the system when leaving the vehicle.
- Check your vehicle if you hear the alarm sound, but don't try to stop a person attempting to break in. Get a good description of the person and call the police.

When shopping for a new vehicle, look for some key features, including:

- Interior hood and trunk lock releases. Install a secondary hood lock if your car does not have one.
- A factory immobilizer – a computer chip in the key.
- A locking steering wheel.
- Other anti-theft devices, such as an alarm or GPS tracking system.

The Wake Forest Police Department encourages citizens to report suspicious behavior or activity by calling (919) 556-9111.

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For more information about the Town of Wake Forest, contact Public Information Officer Bill Crabtree at (919) 554-6196.